

First Eucharist Retreat

The retreat is a time for the parents and their children to prepare for the reception of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. It is usually held shortly before the reception of First Eucharist. It takes into consideration the attention span of the children. The retreat should provide an opportunity to review the meaning of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist in ways especially meaningful to the children. The instruction and invitation to receive Jesus into their hearts with fasting, love, reverence and joy should be presented in such a way that all may come to know the true presence of Jesus Christ in the Body and Blood consecrated at Mass.

Two to four hours is sufficient time for a retreat for children preparing to receive the Sacrament of Eucharist.

Parents are the first faith educators of their children. Therefore, **parents need to play an active role in the retreat**. Children, with their parents, should journey together through this preparation period.

Remember that this is a retreat, not a vacation bible school experience. **Children are to be given an opportunity to encounter the Lord** and be immersed in prayer at an age appropriate level.

Retreats can be formatted in various ways. The sample outlines provided have the children and parents progressing through various stations.

Examples are taken from Our Sunday Visitor, Diocese of Fargo, Holy Family Parish in Woodruff, Immaculate Conception Parish in New Richmond and St. Joseph Parish in Rice Lake.

Sample Outline A

- I. Welcome and sign in (use name tags)
Introductions and Instructions
 Pastor welcome
 Distribute any handouts
 Explain the layout and flow of the retreat
Opening Prayer
- II. Rotate through four stations
- III. Break – with snacks and/or meal
- IV. Rotate through four more stations
- V. Concluding Prayer of a Children’s Eucharistic Adoration, prayer service or Mass

Sample Outline B

- I. Welcome and sign in (use name tags)
Introductions and Instructions
 Pastor welcome
 Distribute any handouts
 Explain the layout and flow of the retreat
Opening Prayer
- II. Rotate through four stations
- III. Snack
- IV. Concluding Prayer of a Children’s Eucharistic Adoration, prayer service or Mass

Sample Outline C

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Complete two worksheets with parent for review and reinforcement of what learned in class
- III. Craft project (a keepsake of the sacrament)
- IV. Interview – go over Eucharist with their catechist, teacher and/or other representative
- V. Visit and tour the Church
- VII. Closing Prayer

Sample Outline D

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Children and Parents separate for different activities
- III. Come together for an activity
- IV. Children and Parents separate for different activities
- V. Come together for an activity
- VI. Closing Prayer (Profession of Faith)

Break Outs/Stations Examples

Reenacting the Last Supper

1. Begin with short prayer
2. Have children put on costumes and assemble along a long table. Have one of the male parents be Jesus
3. Recite the play (see script at end of document)
4. Discuss and reflect on the play
5. End with Matthew 8:8 *Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.*

Banners

<http://www.catholicsupply.com/christmas/fcbannerkit.html> Banner Kits

Grandma's Bread Video

<http://www.videoswithvalues.org/education/bread.html>)

Discussion ideas for video:

- Families are very important because they will always love us no matter what we have done or no matter what happens.
- Mario's grandma loved him very much just as Jesus loves us.
- Although Nonna (Grandma) died and left her family to go to heaven, she still lives on in the hearts and minds of her family – in her bread plans and recipes and in her love for her family.
- This movie reminds me of Jesus.
- Jesus loved us so much that he gave up his life and died on the cross for us so that when we die we can go to heaven to be with him and all the people we love.
- Just like Nonna left her pans and recipes, Jesus also left us something wonderful to remember him – the precious gift of his Body and Blood in the Sacrament of Communion.

Moses & Passover

Watch video of the story of Moses and discuss the Passover.

The Blessing Cup

Make Host and Chalice project with students - <http://catholicing.com/host-and-chalice-craft-for-catholic-kids/>
Pray Scripture passage, petitions, song.

Tour of the Church

Family Tree & Baptism

- Introduce the First Sacrament of Initiation – Baptism and now we continue the journey with the Second Sacrament of Initiation – Holy Communion
 - Talk about Candle, Water, Oil used at baptism
- Work on Family Tree (give children a big picture of a tree with lines for family members). If not completed, take home, complete and bring back to hang on pew during first communion.
 - Talk with children about being part of Jesus family

Life Giving Bread

Leader: We are going to take a look at the Ingredients needed for Life Giving Bread. As we discuss the symbolism and action of each ingredient it may help us to understand why Jesus chose something as simple as bread to share His life with us.

Leader: (holding up a stalk of wheat) A grain of wheat is only a seed, a grain of wheat. But with soil, water and sunlight it will grow. Just like a grain of wheat we need others in our life to grow.

The leader passes two bowls with grains of wheat in them down each side of the table.

Leader: Jesus' life was crushed so we can go to heaven. A grain of wheat must be crushed to make flour. Sometimes we are able to do hard things because we love others.

Pass the two bowls of flour down the table.

Leader: Yeast makes the bread rise. Yeast is a sign of growth and new life. The Word of God is the yeast that grows in us.

Pass the two bowls of yeast.

Leader: Salt adds flavor and helps the yeast do its work. Jesus call each of us to be salt for the earth.

Pass the two bowls of salt.

Leader: Water is a sign of life and cleansing. Through Baptism we received the water of ever-lasting life.

Pass the water.

Leader: Oil helps to make the bread more tender. At baptism, anointing, and confirmation, we receive the healing power of holy oil.

Pass the oil.

Leader: Bread takes time to mix it together and make it. Just as the Word of God, the water, the oil, all need to be worked through our lives.

Leader: Then bread needs warmth and rest to be able to rise. Just as we need time for quiet and prayer. It takes time to love, have faith and grow.

Pass down the bottles of hand sanitizer and everyone sanitizes their hands.

Leader: Bread is meant to be shared. Jesus calls each of us to be bread for others. Our Lord Jesus is the Bread of Life of all of us. Together, let us pray our traditional meal prayer.

(All say the prayer together)

Leader: As I cut into the loaf of Grandma's bread and pass it along each side of the table, I invite you to take a piece to enjoy. As we eat our bread, let us remember, that from now on, Jesus calls us to be bread for one another.

Rosary Bracelets

Pray a decade of the rosary and show them how to use the rosary. (Have rosaries for them to use)

Make Rosary Bracelets - <http://catholicicing.com/easy-rosary-craft-for-kids/>

Hand out Rosary Coloring Books for children to take home.

Lectio Divina (<http://kellitrujillo.wordpress.com/tag/lectio-divina/>)

1) Say something like "Let's quiet our hearts and minds before we read this story." Allow about 5 to 10 seconds of quietness.

2) Read the story aloud with emphasis and emotion, perhaps even doing different voices for the various speakers. Rereading the story a second time, might help the children hear the word.

3) Reflect on the passage aloud together by asking, "What do you think this means?" or "What stands out to you about this story? Why?"

4) Say, "Let's ask God to help us understand more about what this passage means." Then briefly pray aloud, asking God for further understanding.

5) Say, "Let's keep praying but without words now as we listen to God." Allow about 30 seconds (or more if your child is very focused on prayer), then say "Amen."

THE LAST SUPPER SKIT

- Jude Thaddeus:** It was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- James** Jesus, where should we plan for you to eat the Passover meal?
- Jesus:** Go into the city and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, "The teacher asks you, 'Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'"
- Peter:** We did as Jesus asked and the man showed us to a room upstairs.
- Andrew:** The Feast of Unleavened – flat - Bread is the preparation time before Passover.
- Matthew:** Passover is celebrated by Jews since the time of Moses, when the Lords saved the Israelite babies.
- John:** That evening we sat with Jesus to have a quiet meal. We had a lot on our mind. We were worried about people wanting to kill Jesus.
- Jesus:** I tell you, one of you here will turn against me.
- Simon:** We all looked at each other in shock.
- Thomas:** It isn't I Lord, is it?
- Bartholomew:** It isn't I Lord, is it?
- Jesus:** The one who dips his bread into the bowl with me will turn me in. I will die, just as it is written, but the man who betrays me will feel sorry forever.
- Judas:** It isn't I lord, is it?
- Jesus:** Yes, you are the one.
- Philip:** None of us heard what Jesus had said to Judas. We were too busy watching Jesus break apart some bread.
- Jesus:** Take this and eat it. This is my body which is given for you.
- James the Less:** Then Jesus took a full cup of wine.
- Jesus:** This is my blood, which will be poured out for many people so their sins may be forgiven.
- Peter:** We then ate the bread and drank from the cup. We continued the meal after this. We enjoyed talking with Jesus and asking Him questions.

Thomas: After a while, Jesus went into a different room and took off his everyday clothes and put a large towel around him. He looked like a servant.

Bartholomew: He poured water into a large bowl and washed our feet. He dried them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

John: By washing our feet, He was doing something that only servants do. Not kings.

Peter: Lord, are you going to wash my feet?

Jesus: You don't understand what I am doing, but you will later.

Peter: No, you will never wash my feet. You are very special.

Jesus: If I don't wash your feet, you cannot be with me.

Peter: Then Lord, don't just wash my feet, but my hands and head too.

Jesus: I just need to wash your feet to make your whole body clean.

Andrew: After Jesus was done washing our feet, He put His everyday clothes back on and returned to the table.

Jesus: Do you understand what I have done for you? You call me Teacher and Lord and that is who I am. And now that I have washed your feet, you can also wash one another's feet.

James: When Jesus washed our feet, he was showing us an example of how we should treat others. We need to be nice to others. If we do this, Jesus will bless us.

www.dltk-bible.com/cv/plast_supper_cv.asp